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## U.S. Mint Celebrates Summer with the Launch of New South Carolina Quarters

May 26, 2000

Launch of South Carolina Quarters Marks Midpoint of Year Two for Popular 50 State Quarters™ Programs

COLUMBIA, S.C. — U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow today joined South Carolina Governor Jim Hodges and officials from the U.S. Mint for the unveiling of the newest design in the 50 State Quarters™ Program, honoring South Carolina. The U.S. Mint has begun shipping the South Carolina quarters to Federal Reserve banks for distribution to commercial banks and financial institutions, and will produce more than one billion of the new quarters to keep pace with the public demand for new quarters.

The South Carolina quarter was launched at a celebration at the Dutch Fork Elementary School, where Governor Jim Hodges presented new quarters to the students at the school to show his appreciation for their participation.

"Many of the ideas for the South Carolina quarter design came from elementary students who are enthusiastic about our nation's culture and history," said U.S. Treasurer Mary Ellen Withrow. "Our goal is to educate the American people about their heritage and get them excited about collecting."

The South Carolina quarter depicts the Carolina Wren, the state bird, and the Yellow Jessamine, the state flower and the state Palmetto tree. The importance of the Palmetto Tree dates back to Revolutionary war when colonists used a fort made of Palmetto logs to successfully defeat a British fleet trying to capture Charleston Harbor. Since then, South Carolina has been called "The Palmetto State."

"These state emblems symbolize what is best about South Carolina," said Governor Hodges. "The Palmetto Tree represents our strength. The song of the Carolina Wren symbolizes the hospitality of our people. And the Yellow Jessamine flower is part of the vast natural beauty of our state."

Legislation signed by the President in late 1997 authorized the Mint to honor the 50 states in the order they entered the Union or ratified the Constitution by producing five quarters each year from 1999 through 2008 with reverse designs celebrating the heritage of each state. The design process for each quarter is determined within each state by the Governor before design concepts are sent to the Mint, and then returned to the states for final selection. Approval of the final design rests with the Treasury Secretary. The well–known "Eagle" reverse quarter is scheduled to resume in 2009.

The 50 State Quarters are manufactured at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints, which produce all legal tender, U.S. circulating coins, before being shipped to the Federal Reserve for distribution through the banking system. The Federal Reserve orders new quarters to ensure an adequate supply to meet the needs of commerce as commercial banks demand.

For further information on the 50 State Quarters Program and how to collect the new quarters, visit the Mint's web site at <a href="https://www.usmint.gov">www.usmint.gov</a>.

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